

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (CA-47) today released the following statement regarding Cinco de Mayo, an annual celebration marking the historic triumph of the Mexican people over the French Army in the battle of Puebla in 1862:

"Cinco de Mayo is an important celebration of the rich cultural contributions of Mexican Americans to the United States. Mexican American music, art, language, cuisine, and tradition have made communities across the country stronger and more vibrant. And Hispanics, like other groups, recognize the power of hard-work and the importance of freedom and opportunity.

"As a daughter of immigrant parents that emigrated from Mexico, I join with the Mexican American community in celebration of Cinco de Mayo. Today's celebration underscores the influence and contributions Mexican Americans have made to our country, especially in the great state of California.

"Hispanics are also playing an increasingly important economic role as well. Latinos are the fastest-growing minority group and, as such, are a vital part of our workforce. Hispanics own more than 1.6 million small businesses generating annual revenues in excess of \$222 billion. And with millions in purchasing power, Hispanic consumers are emerging as a primary source of business in the American economy.

"As we struggle to recover from the worst economic crisis since the Great Depression, it's important to understand the unique economic challenges and opportunities facing our Hispanic communities. Hispanic workers are disproportionately employed in jobs and in areas that were hit hard by the recession. Not only that, they are also underrepresented in sectors that *have* experienced growth, such as education and health care.

"In Congress, I will continue to work with my colleagues to deliver solutions that address these challenges and put more people back to work. In the long term, our economic recovery will depend on initiatives that expand opportunity for all Americans, regardless of their race, gender, or ethnicity. For me, that's what the American Dream is about: equal opportunity for everyone with the drive to succeed."